

ABSTRACT

Methods of making acid and rennet-based cheeses include processing a previous lot of milk to produce curds and whey from the previous lot of milk, and removing the whey from the curd. For cottage cheeses, curds are washed with a wash water. Whey and wash water (when used) include fine particles of curd, which are collected, added, and mixed into a subsequent lot of milk preferably using a mixer such as a homogenizer or colloid mill. Mixing preferably reduces the fine particle size of at least a plurality of the fine particles and increases the total amount of surface area thereof. Fine particles are reincorporated into the matrix of the curd made from the subsequent lot of milk, which increases curd yield. Also provided is a higher yield cheese that is made from a subsequent lot of milk that includes fine particles of curd from a previous lot of milk.